

**From:** HMAletter@aol.com@inetgw  
**To:** Microsoft ATR  
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After years of waiting and hoping, I cannot find many in the corporate IT world that is satisfied, or even a bit happy, with the currently proposed settlement with Microsoft. For a company that has scoffed at Justice for many years, I find it hard to believe that those involved in the case would let them proceed as they have.

For those that are unaware of just how much we have all suffered as a result of this monopoly, I offer just some of the hardships. Microsoft took over the browser market by incorporating Internet Explorer (IE) into Windows. Outlook and Outlook Express, Microsoft's e-mail software, virtually eliminated all development from other competitors. Outlook Express comes with virtually all Windows computers for no additional price. I might add that Outlook has been the prime delivery mechanism for hackers looking to spread dreaded viruses. As the Justice Department looks for a speedy end to this case, Microsoft has made it very difficult for new browsers and other software to work with their latest buggy system called Windows XP. RealPlayer and various other small competitive products have been locked out from the system at various points, as have any non Windows computers into the MSN networks.

For those that are not tech-savvy, I must do my best to dissuade you from believing that Microsoft's monopoly position has not stifled creativity or slowed down technology. Many "new" features in the current release of XP have been standard fare on Apple computers for over 3 years. As one who both owns and supports both platforms, I can attest to the decreased stress level and increased productivity on the Apple platform. Many Apple standards are simply adopted by Microsoft at later dates and used to further entrench their monopoly. Apple stands today only as a result of the infamous 1997 deal with Microsoft in which Apple dropped all pending lawsuits against them in return for 5 years of continued development of the popular Microsoft Office Suite. I might also add that Microsoft Word and Excel were originally developed for the Macintosh platform, not Windows.

If Justice or the Court needs any impetus to look for a stronger settlement against Microsoft they need look no further than the current Windows XP or the .NET strategy and corresponding products. I suspect that Justice will have to revisit this issue 4 years or so down the road. Unfortunately, it might be too late for the many companies and products that have been destroyed by current monopolistic activities. I am always saddened to see Windows machines in the classroom, an area that has long been the strength of Apple. Down the road, school districts will have to grapple with the issues of Microsoft's licensing practices, not to mention the tremendous support budget increases required to keep the systems up and running. This is fact, not merely statements. There are far more issues to contend with than those brought up in the original antitrust case. In fact, I believe if Justice had

the foresight, they would be preparing a new case based on the events that have transpired between 1998 and the present. At any rate, I would advise anyone looking into a reasonable settlement to discuss the current situations in the PC world with the users, and the executives of companies that sell the hardware and software.

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